

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
Norfolk Division**

JOSEPH ORTIZ, #1028405,

Petitioner,

v.

ACTION NO. 2:24cv331

CHADWICK DOTSON,

Respondent.

FINAL ORDER

Petitioner Joseph Ortiz (“Ortiz”), a Virginia inmate, filed a *pro se* petition for a writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254 on May 17, 2024. ECF No. 1. Ortiz argues that amendments to Virginia’s statutory scheme governing earned sentence credits violate the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment, the Ex Post Facto Clause, and the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. *Id.* at 21. Respondent, Chadwick Dotson, Director of the Virginia Department of Corrections, moved to dismiss the petition. ECF No. 16.

The matter was referred to a United States Magistrate Judge pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(B) and (C) and Rule 72 of the Rules of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia for report and recommendation.

The report and recommendation, filed February 27, 2025, recommends that respondent’s motion to dismiss, ECF No. 16, be granted, and Ortiz’s federal petition, ECF No. 1, be dismissed with prejudice. ECF No. 20, at 5. Each party was advised of the right to file written objections to

the findings and recommendations made by the Magistrate Judge. *Id.* at 6. Neither party has filed an objection.

The Court, having reviewed the record, does hereby adopt and approve the findings and recommendations set forth in the report and recommendation. The Court, therefore, **ORDERS** that respondent's motion to dismiss, ECF No. 16, is **GRANTED**, and Ortiz's petition is **DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE**.

Ortiz has failed to demonstrate "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right," and, therefore, the Court declines to issue any certificate of appealability pursuant to Rule 22(b) of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure. *See Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 537 U.S. 322, 335–36 (2003).

Ortiz is **ADVISED** that because a certificate of appealability is denied by this Court, he may seek a certificate from the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Fed. R. App. P. 22(b); Rules Gov. § 2254 Cases in U.S. Dist. Cts. 11(a). **If Ortiz intends to seek a certificate of appealability from the Fourth Circuit, he must do so within thirty (30) days from the date of this Final Order. Ortiz may seek such a certificate by filing a written notice of appeal with the Clerk of the United States District Court, United States Courthouse, 600 Granby Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23510.**

The Clerk shall mail a copy of this Final Order to Ortiz and counsel of record for respondent.

/s/
Arenda L. Wright Allen
United States District Judge

Norfolk, Virginia
April 1, 2025